

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A containment/exclusion boom comprising:
a boom curtain comprising an upper curtain portion and a lower curtain portion that are connected together at a central region, the upper and lower curtain portions each being formed of a sheet of flexible fabric material that allows the flow of water therethrough and, during use, each acts to filter water flowing therethrough;

first and second support systems which can be positioned in a body of water and connected separately to distinct positions on the boom curtain, wherein the first and second support systems are independently selected from the group consisting of (i) a floating support system comprising a plurality of flotation units, (ii) a permanent or semi-permanent structure comprising a plurality of pilings and one or more horizontal members spanning between adjacent pilings, and (iii) a combination consisting of (i) and (ii);

whereby the first and second support systems maintain ~~at least one of~~ both the upper and lower curtain portions in a substantially sloped arrangement upon introduction of the boom into the body of water.

2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 ~~2~~ wherein the first support system is connected to an upper end of the upper curtain portion.

4. (currently amended) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 ~~2~~ wherein the second support system is connected to the central region

5. (currently amended) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 4 ~~2~~ further comprising a ballast connected to the central region.

6. (currently amended) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 ~~2~~ further comprising a ballast connected to a lower end of the lower curtain portion.

7. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 further comprising a Y-panel anchoring system connected to a lower end of the lower curtain portion.

8. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 wherein the flexible fabric material is a geosynthetic fabric.

9. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 wherein the first support system comprises a floating support system.

10. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 wherein the second support system comprises a floating support system.

11. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 wherein the first support system is a combination of a permanent or semi-permanent structure and a floating support system.

12. (currently amended) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 2 wherein the upper and lower curtain portions each define a plane, the upper and lower curtain portions being substantially aligned in coplanar relation.

13. (currently amended) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 2 wherein the upper and lower curtain portions each define a plane, the upper and lower curtain portions being aligned in non-coplanar relation.

14. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 13 wherein the upper and lower curtain portions have a cross-sectional V-shaped configuration.

15. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 wherein the upper and lower curtain portions are each formed of two sheets of flexible fabric material.

16. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 15 further comprising:

a gas injection system comprising a source of compressed gas, a conduit in communication with the source of compressed gas, and at least one outlet in a conduit positioned between the two sheets of flexible fabric material of the upper curtain portion.

17. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 15 further comprising:

a gas injection system comprising a source of compressed gas, a conduit in communication with the source of compressed gas, and at least one outlet in a conduit positioned between the two sheets of flexible fabric material of the lower curtain portion.

18. (original) The containment/exclusion boom according to claim 15 further comprising:

a gas injection system comprising a source of compressed gas, a conduit in communication with the source of compressed gas, at least one outlet in a conduit positioned between the two sheets of flexible fabric material of the upper curtain portion, and at least one outlet in a conduit positioned between the two sheets of flexible fabric material of the lower curtain portion.

19. (original) A method of filtering water in a body of water comprising:
providing a containment/exclusion boom according to claim 1 in a body of water substantially surrounding a water intake located within the body of water; and
removing water from the body of water via the water intake, whereby water passes through the curtain of the containment/exclusion boom before said removing.

20. (original) The method according to claim 19 wherein the upper and lower boom portions are both maintained in a sloped position in the water, whereby each of the upper and lower portions is independently sloped at an angle, relative to the water surface, of between about 25 and about 65 degrees.